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The Newsletter of the
Wichita File Society

cinegraph

Welcome to the fourth issue of CINEGRAPH, the newsletter of the Wichita File Society. Since 1951 the Society has been promoting and presenting alternative cinema in this city. WFS is an educational and cultural organization with membership open to anyone in the greater Wichita metropolitan area.

Though this newsletter is available at the downtown Public Library (first floor, and ART AND MUSIC department), Infored Sources (Campus Activities Center, WSU campus), and the Wichita Art Association, please be advised that a limited number of copies are available for distribution. The only way to be assured of obtaining a copy is to request it by mail from CINEGRAPH, c/o Ben Urish, Editor, 301 W. 11th, Wichita, 67203 (316) 264-5681. We request \$2.00 to help cover postage.

We also request any information regarding file series, local productions, article ideas, WFS history, etc.; please notify the Editor at the above address. Also remember, if you or your organization require information regarding film, whether history, programming, availability, or whatever, WFS will be glad to be of assistance.

FILM JOURNAL IN THE OFFING

Former WFS chairperson John Godwin is currently laying the groundwork for a regionally based film journal. The journal as planned would consist of historical, technical, and editorial articles on any cinema-oriented subject. The premier issue is already in development, and typed submissions or inquiries may be sent to Mr. Godwin at 4B20 Eastwood, Wichita 6721B.

CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

Ground has been broken in the north section of the Cinemas East parking lot, in preparation for an addition to the existing four-plex now housed there. Also, renovation is progressing in the basement of the Crest Theater. The basement was formerly the home of the Commonwealth theater chain's city offices, which are now at Cineplex East (previously the American Entertainment corporate headquarters.) Further east still, building of the new shopping center that will house a six screen theater for the Dickinson chain is nearing completion. Though past experience indicates otherwise, we remain hopeful that this increase in theaters will result in more presentations of alternative films, rather than five places in which one may see HAROBODIES III.

FILM INSPIRED BY MONTAGE PRODUCTIONS

CINEGRAPH editor Ben Urish is making a film in the style of the series of films done by Montage Productions in Wichita from 1959 to 1964. (See article in CINEGRAPH 1:2). Assisting Mr. Urish in the filming are former WFS chairpeople Rob McHenry and Scott Phillips. Both Mr. Phillips and Mr. McHenry have been involved in local film projects in the past. The film, titled PALACKY, is about a turn-of-the-century western Kansas cemetery founded by Bohemian immigrant settlers. An electronic soundtrack is being prepared with local artist Joel Sanderson. The film will be shown at a future WFS presentation.

RESPONSE TO CINEGRAPH

CINEGRAPH has gotten numerous responses and favorable comments from its readers. We try to respond to each as best we can. The only complaint has been about the short number of copies available. Re-read the introduction. Also, we've gotten questions about many films and personalities, including John Wayne, Jean Harlow, Harold Lloyd, and Monty Python's Flying Circus. If you have any questions, comments, or submissions, please contact us at the above-mentioned address and/or phone number.

THE WICHITA FILM SOCIETY KITSCH FILM FESTIVAL

Though WFS had often shown films of a Kitsch nature (usually quite unintentionally!), and it could easily be seen from their film schedules that they weren't a group of cinema snobs, it still came as a surprise when NFS announced its first film festival devoted to films of negligible worth and questionable taste.

The announcement came in the November 4th, 1974 issue of THE SUNFLOWER, the NSU campus newspaper. The article listed three films for the upcoming "First Annual Kitsch Film Festival", but only one of those three was shown at the festival itself. Kitsch prizes were awarded, and the event proved to be a resounding success. Such a success, in fact, that both NFS and the campus-based film organization FLICK scheduled Kitsch-like films on their next schedule.

The time was ripe for such programming, and many films of Cult status and Camp sensibility were screened throughout the next several seasons. Among them were: APPLEKNOCKERS AND COKE, FREAKS, COCAINE FIENDS, TERROR OF TWY TONN, and films by Andy Warhol and John Waters.

Originally, the three-film series consisted of features only, with short intermissions and the awarding of prizes. Later on, short subjects were interspersed between the features and became an expected highlight.

An accident caused the temporary demise of the Festival. A Halloween showing of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD was the reason. Many patrons arrived at the theater for a midnight screening of the film, but the film had been shown at noon! Seeing the potential, both WFS and FLICK scheduled a couple of shows at midnight, to overwhelming success.

The Midnight series replaced the Kitsch Festival for several seasons, until 1984, the tenth anniversary of the Festival's birth, when it was reinstated. As part of NFS's 35th anniversary celebration, a "Best of the Worst" Kitsch Festival was planned. Unfortunately, circumstances prevented this from occurring. While the festival is once again in limbo, there are plans to present a special Kitsch show in the near future. You've been warned!

FIRST ANNUAL KITSCH FILM FESTIVAL

COLLEGE CONFIDENTIAL
PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE
ROCK, PRETTY BABY

SECOND FESTIVAL

SENIOR PROM
HALLUCINATION GENERATION
CAT NAPES OF THE MOON

THIRD FESTIVAL

RODAN
LEGEND OF THE LONE RANGER
RETURN OF DR. X

FOURTH FESTIVAL

THE NILD PARTY (1956)
THE NEXT VOICE YOU HEAR
CONDITIONED REFLEXES

FIFTH FESTIVAL

COBRA NUNAN
DATING DO'S AND DON'TS
FLASH GORDON
KNON FOR SURE
CHAINED FOR LIFE

SIXTH FESTIVAL

NANIC (1934)
SK1000
MYSTERY OF THE LEAPING FISH
BRIDE OF THE MONSTER

SEVENTH FESTIVAL

HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL
 GLAMOUR GALS OF BURLESQUE
 BEDTIME FOR BONZO
 ART REEL #1
 ROBOT MONSTER

EIGHTH FESTIVAL

THIRTEEN FRIGHTENED GIRLS
 VARIETY GIRLS
 SANTA CLAUS CONQUERS THE MARTIANS
 FOREIGN PRESS AWARDS
 DESTROYER ESCORT 733, SHIP OF SHAME

MIDNIGHT FEATURES, 1980-1983

I CHANGED MY SEX
 PINK FLAMINGOS
 EXTASE
 THEY SAVED HITLER'S BRAIN
 5,000 FINGERS OF DR. TERNILLIGER
 DR. CYCLOPS
 GODZILLA'S REVENGE
 WHAT'S UP, TIGER LILY?
 PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE
 RETURN OF DR. X
 BED-SITTING ROOM
 COPACABANA
 NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD
 BEDTIME FOR BONZO
 SEX MADNESS
 REEFER MADNESS

(several titles were shown more than once)

CALENDAR

- 11/12 (Th) BLOOD WEDDING— First of Spanish director Carlos Saura's dance films, based on the Garcia Lorca play. Kansas Room, CAC/WSU, 3:00 and 5:30 pm, Free.
- 11/13 (F) THE BATTLE OF SAN PIETRO/ANDERSON PLATOON— Two combat documentaries, the first a WWII film by John Huston (THE MALTESE FALCON), the second an Oscar-winning portrait of troops in Vietnam. Art Association, 9112 E. Central, 8:00 pm, \$3.00.
- 11/13 (F) LIVING WITH YOURSELF— Christian film with Dr. Tony Campolo. Dandelion, 1601 E. Douglas, 7:00 pm, Free.
- 11/20 (F) MUDDY RIVER— Oscar-nominated 1982 Japanese film about two boys growing up in Osaka in the 1950's, an acclaimed shomin-geki (ordinary life) film in the tradition of the great director Ozu. Art Association, 8:00 pm, \$3.00.
- 11/20 (F) IMPERIALS— 20th ANNIVERSARY CONCERT— Concert film. Dandelion, 7:00 pm, Free.
- 11/21 (Sa) FAMILY FILM FESTIVAL— Feature cartoon CHARLOTTE'S WEB, from the E.B. White book, and shorts with Bugs Bunny, Mighty Mouse and Woody Woodpecker. CAC Ballroom/WSU, 1:30 pm, parents free, kids \$1.50.
- 11/23 (M) SALT OF THE EARTH— Classic 1953 Independent film about striking miners in Mexico, made by blacklisted screenwriter-director Herbert Biberman and his wife, actress Gale Sondergaard. "****1/2... taut drama... refreshingly pro-feminist viewpoint." —TV Movies. Salt of the Earth Film Society, First National Black Historical Association, 601 N. Water, \$2.00.
- 11/27 (F) SIGN POSTS ALOFT— Christian film about aviation. Dandelion, 7:00 pm, Free.
- 12/4 (F) TRIBUTE TO KING VIDOR— Two films by the director best known for THE BIG PARADE and THE FOUNTAINHEAD. The tribute features SHOW PEOPLE, a silent comedy about Hollywood with Marlon Davies, and A STRANGER'S RETURN, starring Miriam Hopkins as a city girl who goes home to the countryside, a lovely pastoral romance. Art Association, 8:00 pm, \$3.00.
- 12/4 (F) ORDINARY GUY— Christian film, no other information. Dandelion, 7:00 pm, Free.
- 12/11 (F) THE SACRIFICE— Highly praised drama, the last film of the Soviet director Andrei Tarkovsky, about an artist who makes a mystical sacrifice to avert nuclear war. Spectacular photography by Sven Nykvist, Ingmar Bergman's cinematographer. Art Association, 8:00 pm, \$3.00.
- 12/18 (F) ORDET— Great religious drama by the Danish director of THE PASSION OF JOAN OF ARC, about the struggle between two families with differing conceptions of what faith is. Art Association, 8:00 pm, \$3.00.

CINEGRAPH
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COMING SOON...AND THEN
AGAIN MAYBE NOT

Usually in this space, COMING SOON...MAYBE tells about films that might be coming to the Wichita area. In the last issue, we not only told about these films, but were able to even provide the theaters and dates that the films—the Swedish comedy *MY LIFE AS A DOG* and *GOOD MORNING BABYLON*, from the Taviani brothers (*NIGHT OF THE SHOOTING STARS*)—would open.

Or so we thought. But at the last minute, the theater chain decided to yank these two films in favor of some piece of RAMBO-style exploitation dreck or a third go-round at *LA BAMBBA*. Apparently they believe they know their audience.

Let's prove 'em wrong! If you think Wichitans deserve *MY LIFE AS A DOG* or *GOOD MORNING BANYLON* instead of some third-rate retread, call or write the local Commonwealth Theatres office at 320 N. Rock Rd., 686-9572. In our experience, the local managers will be only too happy to pass along the news to their bosses in Kansas City, who make the decisions for the city they consider a cowtown— till we show them otherwise.

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ALSO NOT COMING SOON,
OUR INTERVIEW WITH
WAA FILMS SERIES
COORDINATOR MICHAEL GEBERT
(AND HERE'S THE
SAD REASON WHY)

Also, in the last issue we promised that this issue would have an interview with the coordinator of the series at the Art Association, which had already been conducted by that issue's publication date.

However, in the meantime the situation has changed, and the interview is no longer relevant. Here's why:

The crux of the interview was why the WAA series was faring so much better than other attempts (WFS in its later years at WSU, the Marple, etc.). Since then, however, while the WAA series is still drawing considerably better crowds than most of the other attempts, it's not necessarily the booming success it was. Attendance is down from the highs of 200-250 registered last summer for films like *MEN...* and *MY BEAUTIFUL LAUNDRETTE* and *HOME OF THE BRAVE*.

The reason is that the Eagle-Beacon isn't reviewing individual films like they were during the first season. And Wichitans consequently aren't racing to them in quite the numbers they were. Now, to our mind, there are two courses of action here to keep WAA films going strong.

We can try to encourage the Eagle-Beacon to run reviews again. Or we can encourage the people of Wichita not to be afraid to try unusual films unless it's been certified by Bob Curtright that they're not over our heads. Films like *MUDGY RIVER*, *A GREAT WALL*, *DECLINE OF THE AMERICAN EMPIRE* are not only among the best films playing in this town, they're also perfectly accessible to any intelligent adult. It's time to throw away the crutch of following the dictates of a reviewer and experiment with, and support, alternative film in Wichita. It's the only way we'll ever mature as a town that appreciates film—and join dozens of other cities, many smaller than we.